



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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[http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle\\_mountain\\_field.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field.html)

In Reply Refer To:  
3200 (NVB0100)  
NVN-84268X

Dear Interested Public:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Mount Lewis Field Office (MLFO) has received an *Addendum to the McGinness Hills Geothermal Development Project Operation Plan and Utilization Plan (UP)* from Ormat Technologies, Inc. (ORMAT). Addendum 2 to the UP is for the proposed Phase III of the project, which is located approximately 71 miles south of Battle Mountain, Nevada in Grass Valley.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA, the BLM MLFO will be preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA), which will analyze the impacts of the proposed McGinness Hills Phase III Project in Lander County, Nevada. The EA would identify, describe, and evaluate direct, indirect, residual, and cumulative impacts from the Proposed Action including resource protection measures for mitigating the possible impacts from the project. An interdisciplinary approach will be used to develop the EA, to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified.

ORMAT is proposing to expand and continue to operate the McGinness Hills geothermal project, which is located on BLM-administered lands. The proposed project consists of a modification to an existing UP. ORMAT is currently authorized to disturb up to 270 acres associated with the McGinness Hills Phase I and II projects. To date, ORMAT has disturbed approximately 108 acres, leaving approximately 162 acres of additional authorized disturbance. ORMAT is proposing to exchange these undisturbed authorized disturbance acres for disturbance in the Phase III project area. The Phase III project consists of access roads (1.8 acres), a pipeline (5.1 acres), a power plant (15 acres), wells (up to 18.9 acres), and a transmission line tie-in (1.1 acres); totaling approximately 42 acres (or less) of new disturbance.

The BLM has identified the following preliminary issues and resource concerns:

- Air quality
- Cultural resources
- Environmental justice
- Migratory birds
- Native American religious concerns
- Noxious weeds and invasive and non-native species
- Threatened and endangered species

- Minerals
- Noise
- Paleontological resources
- Grazing management
- Access and land use
- Social and economic values
- Soils
- Special status species
- Vegetation
- Visual resources
- Loss of habitat for wildlife, including greater sage-grouse.

The BLM is seeking your input regarding issues that may be analyzed in the EA. The public scoping period provides the public and other interested agencies and organizations to help identify issues, provide input, and propose alternatives to be addressed in the EA before BLM begins drafting it. Early public involvement is crucial to identify various issues that may be addressed through the process.

Written comments on the scope of the EA must be postmarked or otherwise hand delivered by 4:30 PM on or before July 14, 2017; faxed to ATTN: Kevin Hurrell, Project Manager McGinness Hills Phase III Project; or e-mailed to: [khurrell@blm.gov](mailto:khurrell@blm.gov).

Comments and documents pertinent to this proposal, including names and addresses of respondents, may be viewed at the MLFO during regular business hours (7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays). Comments may be published as part of the EA. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment - including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

For more information, please contact Kevin Hurrell, Planning and Environmental Coordinator at (775) 635-4000.

Sincerely,



Joseph S. Moskiewicz, Jr.  
Acting Field Manager  
Mount Lewis Field Office